

## **Hitt's Hill Open Space Development Community Meeting Rainier Community Center, November 19, 2002**

*Meeting purpose: to inform the community about planned park improvements and come to a community consensus on desired park activities and vegetative character.*

Facilitators: Karen Galt and Cathy Tuttle, Seattle Parks and Recreation

### **Project Background**

#### **1. Opportunities for involvement**

- Call, email, web page, write: Cathy Tuttle Project Planner, 684-7033, [cathy.tuttle@seattle.gov](mailto:cathy.tuttle@seattle.gov) 800 Maynard Avenue South, #300 Seattle, WA 98134 <http://www.cityofseattle.net/parks/proparks/projects/hittshill.htm>
- Friends of Hitt's Hill: Contact Vicky Lee: 760-9535 or 812-3315 or [vickyl@theparamount.com](mailto:vickyl@theparamount.com) for more information about meetings and work parties.

#### **2. Parks Naming Process**

Before park construction begins, the Seattle Parks and Recreation Naming Committee will ask the community to suggest names for the Hitt's Hill site. For several weeks, the Committee will ask for community name suggestions using local media. Then the Committee will review the name suggestions and determine the name for this new park.

#### **3. Goals, budget and schedule**

- In 2000, voters approved the \$198.2 million Pro Parks Levy to fund more than 100 projects throughout the city over the next eight years. Projects include improvements to athletic fields, playgrounds, trails and community centers and parks. The Pro Parks Levy also includes an Opportunity Fund for community-generated development and acquisition projects. The Friends of Hitt's Hill applied for funding from the Opportunity Fund on behalf of Hitt's Hill improvements. On July 29, 2002 the Seattle City Council unanimously approved 12 park acquisition projects and seven development projects to be funded through the \$6 million first funding cycle. The Opportunity Fund granted \$100,000 to develop Hitt's Hill open space.
- The Opportunity Fund will be used to create a Site Enhancement Plan to guide vegetation management, trails, and site improvements. This plan will be used to begin site improvements including park entries and an ADA accessible trail. Construction is tentatively slated to begin in May of 2003. All work will be completed in 2003.

#### **4. Discussion of proposed park activities and elements**

**Park Activities** *After discussions with Friends of Hitt's Hill, Parks developed several ideas about how Hitt's Hill will be used. These ideas include: passive recreation, walking, enjoying views, observing nature, learning about plants, plant stewardship, sitting, safe access into and through the site.*

- Parks asked participants at the community meeting about other ideas of how the site could be used in the future. Community ideas about new uses include:
  - Acknowledge park history (fireworks, ethnic workers)
  - Possibility of engaging local school foundry students to build art project
  - Incorporate art or tile mosaics to act as interpretive markers for plants, local history
  - Habitat preservation: keep deep woods, wildlife, birds
  - Make the entries rustic; add minimal hardscaping
  - Recognize this is an urban park too: native plants/human influence
  - Provide places for school children, scout groups, and stewardship projects

**Park Elements** *Parks staff led a discussion about the design elements the community felt would best support park activities.*

- **Trails:** Firm, stable ADA path required to center of park. Access from S. Brandon St. Path will connect 37<sup>th</sup> Ave S. and S. Brandon St but not have ADA access west of central viewpoint areas. Material used for paving will be crushed rock with binder.
- **Clear entry points:** Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) helps to define path and entry design: sightlines and visibility, no dead ends.
- **Signage:** Markers needed to identify park, ADA accessibility. Signs in this or later phase may identify plant names. Kiosk at entry may be provided at this or later phase.
- **Water** for plant establishment may be provided
- **Site furnishings:** benches (or logs?) or boulders at viewpoints. Minimal furnishings such as trash receptacles may be provided.
- **Plants, fencing, topography** will define boundaries and meet CPTED requirements of natural surveillance and territoriality
- **Parking** ADA space provided on S. Brandon St. Because this is not a destination park, additional parking not needed. No buses, school buses. Possible bike riders.

## **5. Review of landscape characteristics**

*Because maintaining a “natural” area is an important community goal in the development of this site, Parks staff felt it was important for the community to discuss their landscape preferences and what they would characterize as “natural.”*

- Scott Baker, urban forestry consultant, reviewed tree health on site and said his firm had counted 117 “good” trees and 32 “bad” trees. There are liability issues from “bad” trees. Scott led a discussion of fate of large cottonwood with large branches prone to breaking.
- Community looked at photographs and expressed preferences for coniferous forest or deciduous canopy. Community comments:
  - Desire for open winter territorial views
  - Like to see seasonal differences of deciduous woods
  - It is a mistake to take out healthy plants to develop native landscaping
  - Appreciate native landscaping; concern for long-term succession
  - General consensus was to keep deciduous, with limited coniferous planting

## **6. Next steps: Two public meetings: Vision (11/19/02) and Review (March 2003)**

### Community questions, requests

1. Can the community continue to have input into the park design? *Yes. We will be able to consider community input until early in 2003. Then we will need to create construction documents to guide the work planned for 2003.*
2. Can encroachment of private property into the park be controlled? *Parks has land use agreements with some property owners. As the site is developed, Parks will try to make sure there are no encroachments.*
3. Will Parks build fences? *The need for fencing or vegetative barriers with Park neighbors is evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Not all boundaries between the site and adjacent properties will have barriers.*
4. Will all areas of the site be addressed in this project? *Parks will create a Site Enhancement Plan that will address the future development of all areas of the site. We will begin by providing entries, trail, and limited site improvements.*
5. Can improvements continue in phases? *Yes. Community fundraising is ongoing for new plant materials and landscape improvements. Thank you!*